I think more nobly of the spirit, which yearns for things as immortal as itself.
—SHAKESPEARE

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THE TIME OF THE CYCLE

THERE are moments when the student of Theosophy cannot help but stand bewildered by the moral as well as the political confusion of the world scene. How could anyone who cherishes the ideal of universal brotherhood feel otherwise? So many fears, anxieties, partisanships, and suspicions stand between the world and the realization of that ideal—and the forces which support division and antagonism are more powerful, more lethal, than ever before in human history. This, at any rate, is the appearance of things, and it is difficult not to acknowledge the reality of an appearance which so many of the people of the world feel obliged to take seriously.

If students of Theosophy were endowed with the capacity to look behind the veil of historical causation, would what they see give encouragement, or ground for further depression? Perhaps the phrase "historical causation" suggests insight into only the course of external events. Surely, one who was granted unearned clairvoyant perception at the turn of the century—who was enabled to look forward to the agonizing conflicts of fifty years ahead—could have hardly borne the sight. And yet, having endured these years without foreseeing their dread events, we are able to continue our work. There are even multiple signs of soul awakening in the world. The framework of disaster has not prevented the profound questionings and intuitive perceptions which are beginning to characterize the present.

It is perhaps as well that we cannot read the future. A strength of heart unaccustomed in our age would be needed to recognize the living threads of continuity in soul evolution, woven subtly and almost hidden in the coarser fabrics of current history. Such anticipations belong to the synthesizing vision of the degree of adepts, and would be both waste and inhibition to those who have a role as chil-

dren of their time. Cassandra aided no one, least of all herself. "The pure-minded and the brave," as William Q. Judge observes, "can deal with the future and the present far better than any clairvoyant."

This is not an age for pretentious plans and organizing projects. The cycle is filled with sudden and strange Karma out of the past. The ledger book of the accounts among the peoples of the earth reveals no balanced statement to secure the hearts of men with the feeling that justice has been accomplished. Nor is there any wise and sagacious social philosopher among us who is able to declare what ought to be. The need of the age is not for prophets, but for more of those whose settled conviction concerning the meaning and possibilities of human experience has made them "not disturbed by anything that may come to pass."

Individuals, by themselves, with no more than the school of life and the diversities of daily events, are able with right ideas to gain this stability and capacity to withstand the unsettling stir of crisis in the affairs of men. It takes no special competence to see that the roots of all human pain and uncertainty lie deep in the prevailing ignorance of the nature of man, that while circumstances and happenings may vary widely, the problem of knowledge and insight into these circumstances and happenings is always the same. Relief from ignorance, the exchange of disturbance for calm, the beginning of life built upon reliance on the law of compensation—these are not historical developments, but are born in individuals who see or are helped to see which are the right questions for a man to ask.

To bring a better age to birth, new ideas must be planted in vital soil. There is no other way, and neither time nor forbidding events can prevent the growth that belongs to the cycle.

We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming race.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE DRAMA OF REBIRTH

WHEN one thinks of the Drama, it seems natural perhaps that his mind should turn first to the theatre and to the great dramatists of all time—to Aeschylus, Sophocles and, of course, to Shakespeare. One is inclined to think of the magnificent plays these playwrights and poets have given us, such as *Prometheus Bound, Othello, Hamlet* and *King Lear.* The mind goes also to the talented actors of history, those who have brought to life the characters portrayed in the great tragedies. And we think of the heroes of these plays and of the villains. The lives of untold millions of human beings have been enlarged and enriched through the instrumentality of the drama. If we think only of the theatre, however, in connection with drama and dramatic presentation, it is possible that we thereby make a great mistake. For the greatest of all dramas, according to the ancients, is the Drama of the Soul, the Drama of Rebirth.

In the tenth chapter of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* which is entitled "The Universal Divine Perfections" as including all Perfections, Krishna, speaking as the Universal Spirit, portrays himself as *the highest* in all forms. Of luminous bodies, he says, I am the Sun; of floods, I am the Ocean; and of all the senses, I am *Manas,* or the Mind. All these perfections, together with others too numerous to mention, he says, are by way of example—that He is really *the highest* in everything. If the Master had gone further and given other examples, it is possible that he might have said: Of Drama, I am Life here in this body.

How strange it must seem to the reflective mind that men are prone to think of the theatre, a mere contrivance, as the place of real drama, while life here in the body is thought of as largely a matter of routines. Shakespeare held that life *is* a great play. In a profound sense, he was right, for in each life or incarnation, according to Theosophy, man, as a spiritual, immortal being, assumes roles of different characters. He puts on new dresses or costumes, and plays new parts from one incarnation to another. So instead of thinking of the drama as something exclusive to the theatre, would it not be

more in keeping with experience to think of it primarily as life here in the body with its tragedies, joys, trials, failures and victories?

Rebirth is another name, of course, for what is commonly referred to as "reincarnation." This doctrine, if true, means that every human being who now lives upon earth, including ourselves, has lived many times before. It means that the present lifetime is but one in a long series of existences. According to this view, the Soul—the real part of man's nature, unborn, undying—has lived perhaps in ancient Egypt, in ancient Greece or India, in China, in the mid-Eastern countries, and in medieval Europe. It now finds itself here on the American continent, going on with its evolution and destiny. It means that each individual soul shall continue to incarnate until it has achieved whatever it is striving for—and every human being is striving for something.

In the average individual, the Reincarnating Ego is unaware, while acting through the brain-mind, of the fact that it has inhabited many tabernacles of clay. In the early years of a person's existence upon earth, he may go blithely through life, taking everything for granted, accepting the good that comes his way without question. But under the great Law of Cycles and the needs of the Soul, the time must come when one must face evil, when he must do battle, and must conquer or die in the attempt. And what happens in the lives of most men when an evil fate befalls? Is it not true that, as a rule, we complain and despair, and attempt to escape? Is it not a fact that, in most instances, we smart under what we consider to be an ill and unjust Fate? Thinking so, we not only fail to take advantage of the opportunities that are ours—we miss perhaps our cue; we fail to play the part that belongs to us in the great Drama of Rebirth.

Every human being or Soul-Ego has a "part" to play. In one particular incarnation, the part, it might well be, is that of cowherd or horseman, or man of the sea. In another birth, the actor assumes a different role. Thus on and on we go until we have learned to play the many parts, have been both warrior and sage, until we have triumphed over evil and come through trials victorious, as a Hero.

Maxwell Anderson's well-known book, *Off Broadway,* makes an extensive survey of the theatre in an effort to understand the elements that make for successful plays. Mr. Anderson came to the conclusion that the best plays, those that please most and run longest, are the ones that have striving, endurance, and final triumph as their

prominent features. These elements of striving and of triumph, he says, are ultimately demanded by the public. A play, to be successful, must portray the great human qualities of loyalty, courage, endurance, sacrifice and love—and above all, its final judgment must be a *moral* one. Justice and morality must win out in the end. These are the qualities that true drama, that the really great tragedies, all bring to the fire. The hero must always achieve, or, if he does not, he must realize, in defeat, that he is defeated—that the course he has pursued has been a mistaken one. In this sense, even the realization of defeat is a form of triumph, for a lesson of lasting value has been learned. Mr. Anderson believes also that the successful play must build to a crisis, and that the crisis is invariably followed by a discovery made by the hero. This discovery, moreover, must make such an indelible impression upon the character of the hero, that he is virtually *a changed individual.* He must come out, at the end, a better man.

In days of old, the Drama was part of the Sacred Mysteries. The life and work of each of the great religious Saviors, from this point of view, is a drama of the highest order. So viewed, the experiences of Jesus, for example, make a beautiful and inspiring story for theatrical presentation. Born to the lot of poor fisherman and carpenter, Jesus struggles through trial and difficulty—meets the forces of evil and is beset by all manner of temptation. At the "end," even in death, the Hero rises triumphant. The story of the life of Jesus is inspiring because resurrection is true to life and to nature, because it depicts the eternal drama of the Soul.

The life of every human being is a drama of mystical and occult significance, which men of intelligence should strive to understand. In portraying the joys and tragedies of life on earth, the great playwrights have enabled men to step aside from themselves, to correlate what they see on the stage with the actualities of daily life. Viewing a play many a harassed individual is enabled, at least for the moment, to rise above his involvements to assume the position of spectator, to see the problems another human soul may face—how he meets them, and how, through patience, perseverance, and sacrifice, the grinding bonds of Karma are finally broken. It is possible for one to then come back to his own dharma with greater calm.

Is it any wonder that reincarnation is referred to in Theosophical literature as the "Doctrine of Hope"? Might one reason for the despondency many people feel be that they have been led to believe

they live only once? What a terrible injustice that would be! Think of all that lies before each individual to achieve, if only there were time to reach up to and grasp it. Think of the many languages one would like to be able to read and to speak, and of the literature that would be available with such widened range! Think of the sciences and the arts, of the years of striving on the part of men and women to become chemists, musicians, or painters. Is it possible to achieve complete success in any one of these fields in a single lifetime of sixty or seventy years? Because of the necessity of earning a livelihood or because of ill-health, either of one's self or of some friend or relative, the aspirant to culture is oftentimes held in bonds, unable to reach even to a fraction of his aspiration. Reincarnation is the Doctrine of Hope because it provides a series of successive lifetimes, instead of just one birth, in which to realize one's dreams.

One of the primary purposes of the Theosophical Movement of this age is to provide man with a psychology of life that will enable him to rise, at least internally, above the delusions of appearance, to realize that the present lifetime is but one act in the great drama of the Soul, and that there will be other acts and parts to play in future lives.

In each of the great tragedies, one, two, or three important lessons seem to be essayed. Is it possible that in each incarnation, there is perhaps *one* outstanding lesson, paramount to all others, that the experiencer needs to learn? Could it be as with Shakespeare's ugly toad which wears a jewel in its crown, that our present difficult circumstance, if only we could realize it, contains a lesson or a virtue few men possess? Do we search into the cues of our lives for indications as to what these opportunities may be?

Some individuals, it would seem, see little relationship between the circumstances in which they find themselves and the needs and aspirations of the Soul. But if Karma is a fact, then each individual is attracted exactly to that environment or that field of duty he needs to be in to learn the lesson he most needs to learn. Have we asked ourselves the question of what the situation in which we presently find ourselves provides by way of opportunity for the Soul? Are we afraid of some person or thing? Do our surroundings and our obligations to family and to humanity frighten us, so that we fall back cowardly before the awful sight? If so, we should understand that according to the Law of Necessity these situations will continue to

appear, either in this or another lifetime, until the Soul asserts its magic power and faces with courage its trial.

Is it patience, perseverance and endurance we need to learn—the virtues portrayed preeminently by Prometheus who, rather than compromise principles or purchase his freedom for a price, chose to remain chained to the rock of torture for ages? Is it suspicion, as in the case of Othello, that is the blemish of the Soul? If such is the weakness of character, then one may be certain that the Soul will continue to incarnate into such surroundings and with such people that the trial will repeatedly present itself until the weakness is overcome.

It is only when the individual gains a true perception of Karma, when he makes the discovery that life is absolutely just, that the high point in his individual drama will be reached. When this great discovery is made, the soul assumes the role of spectator instead of actor. The binding threads of Karma are loosened. He is ready for another part.

When the striving individual reaches that stage in life where he becomes conscious of his *divine* destiny, and determines to fulfill it, he is said to attract the attention of the Buddhas and Christs. These great Heroes, it is held, see his light. If the aspirant takes his new cue and perseveres, the time will come, either in the life in which he makes the discovery or in some succeeding incarnation, when he will come directly under the influence of the Great Brotherhood. Being one of their Fraternity, he no longer works for himself, but becomes a spiritual helper of mankind.

The real Heroes in the great Drama of Life are the Masters of Wisdom—those who, having reached the goal and earned the right to eternal bliss, say in their divine compassion: "For others' sake this great reward I yield." They are the Saviors of Mankind, members of that invisible Host which ever protects and watches over Humanity within Karmic limits. Here is drama carried to its highest power.

> Whatever objection may be brought forward against this doctrine; however much it is denied, because, forsooth, it has never been hitherto made public in Europe and therefore since it is unknown to Orientalists, it must needs be "a myth of modern invention"—no one will be bold enough to say that this idea of helping suffering mankind at the price of one's almost interminable self-sacrifice, is not one of the grandest and noblest that was ever evolved from human brain. (H. P. Blavatsky.)

ON FIRST ACQUAINTANCE— "THE SECRET DOCRINE"

I

[It is, perhaps, seldom realized that the most momentous of Theosophical works can be approached without fear or confusion by a new student—providing that the aim is to learn *what one can,* rather than to "master." The notes which follow come from a true "first acquaintance" with the *S.D.* It is the Editors' thought that a sharing of this experience may be encouraging to others who need to learn, as did this student, that the learner need not be frightened just because he is humble. Editors, THEOSOPHY]

THE Secret Doctrine is the common property of the countless millions of men born under various climates" (*S.D.* II, 794). The implication here, clearly, is that the teachings H. P. Blavatsky presented cannot be characterized or limited to any particular group or handled in any one *particular* way; each earnest and persevering student may, then, find a method of study peculiar or suitable to himself.

It will not be an entirely new discovery to note, as this student did, that what begins as the apotheosis of the incomprehensible can become as "the waters of life" if we persevere. With the *S.D.,* why not "abandon results to the Great Law," which, in a metaphysical sense, misses no effort we make to better understand and embody the knowledge found in this book?

This "book" may uncover the hidden crevices of our mind, healing us of sickness unknown even to ourselves; that is, if we can last out the barren period and subsequent crises which precede change. How many humans have given up their effort to understand an hour before their appointed dawn? As Lao-tse says: "People constantly break down just when they are nearing a successful issue."

In an age when men wish to help their bodies more than their minds, an age when liberals are aghast at literal poverty but unconcerned about its cause and concomitants, or the philosophy men live by—in such an age it would be premature to expect a great number to realize that metaphysical poverty and degradation are the

seed of their material counterparts. Thus, we find an abundance of brutal indifference to the life-giving philosophy of *The Secret Doctrine,* and even among those who show some little interest there is often refusal to face the necessity or accept the problems of a "cycle of effort," that is, to be willing to learn the art of crawling before one can walk. Even the person of good motive must someday get beyond the stage of chopping weeds in nature's good garden, begin to undertake the long-term affair of finding out what a gardener does, that he may commence not only to "fell" but to *"uproot* the deadly upas trees of superstition, prejudice, and conceited ignorance . . ."

The first and most important place to begin is with ourselves, for our neighbor will be helped by the efflorescence of our efforts just as filings are affected by the magnet or sunflowers by the sun. We must learn to rely upon the *unity of all beings* to be the means of transmission for our philosophy, knowing that no effort is ever lost, even though the seeds we sow may be seen and appreciated by others only in the future, as we garner and appreciate the results of work done earlier. Here is a "first proposition," indeed.

And, as for second and third:

Many times in *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky illustrated how the inability to perceive or believe in the law of cyclic development led scientists and men of learning astray; further, she showed that even those who perceived aspects of the cyclic law often mistook their understanding of it as the complete and final definition. She pinpointed one of the main problems, that is, that the premises and conclusions of their systems of thought were planted and harvested in the same brain, thus lacking either the breadth of many viewpoints or the depth of time. In fact, she mentioned this as the one advantage that she enjoyed, i.e., she did not have to rely upon her own knowledge only, but handed on a system of thought that had been built and checked for countless ages. The philosophy, being even more ancient than our physiological senses, was thus able to judge in a cyclically truthful way and seemed to say that man, accepting the evidence of his physiological senses, is likely to mistake the *cloak* of truth for Truth itself. If we keep before us this problem of spanning huge cycles of time, in order to have a valid philosophy, we can better understand why the esoteric system is, in relation to the normal views of knowledge, said to teach the "art of doubt." We can also begin to understand why it is impossible for a cycle of

degradation to obliterate the esoteric philosophy, for the discernment necessary for efficient destruction is lacking; or, in other words, those unable to comprehend or believe in the precedence of the mental over the physical and the omnipotence of the Spirit are defeated by their ignorance. Thus we can see why it is said that the Atlanteans were able to create karma of such a powerful and evil nature that its effects are still unfolding, for they did have such belief and knowledge of the preëminence of Spirit and Mind over the physical and used this knowledge in the wrong way. Recognizing the powerful and long enduring evil generated by such intelligent selfishness, we can take to heart H.P.B.'s repeated warnings that the only life worth living is one devoted to *being* in its *collectivity*.

If we can become accustomed to considering our life as merely a *focus* through which help may pour to all beings, and have this as an uppermost mental consideration throughout the day as the various tasks unfold—if we can become devoted listeners to the Spiritual Conscience inside ourselves and follow the *wheel of duty* it points out, disregarding success or failure, but esteeming only a persevering effort—who knows what possibilities may unfold?

It is said (*S.D.* II, 60) that "Even the Orientalists and Mythologists, some of them no Christians at all but 'infidels,' or men of science, entered unconsciously to themselves, and by the mere force of association of ideas and habit, into the theological groove." It may be that H.P.B. is warning us that divorce from a line of thought does not necessarily insure that we will not remain its victims in a more subtle and almost unconscious way. Divorcing themselves *de facto* from Christian Theology, many scientists and learned men of H.P.B.'s day remained victims of its patterns of thought. The sickness of our fathers, though disowned, often lingers as a phantom to warp our new vision unless we make purification and rectification a constant process in our lives, "For mind is like a mirror, it gathers dust while it reflects"; that most excellent and ancient knowledge of *The Secret Doctrine* will be a constant rejuvenator *if* we accept it as knowledge to be assimilated rather than "learned" in the sense of algebra or mundane philosophy. It is not so much what *The Secret Doctrine* does directly, as what is done indirectly to all we do and learn; that is, it seems to affect our approach and definition of knowledge, doing its work with the quality of our life rather than its quantitative aspect.

By this continual cleansing process we are made more independ-

ent in our investigation and effort; we are helped to adhere more closely to the inner voice, making it less garbled by external evaluations. Like a compass it will correct the unavoidable deviations of which we are constant victims, becoming the spirit which carries our mental life into the visibility of objective patterns of effort. This may be one reason why *The Secret Doctrine* remains a puzzle to those who expect to learn "something" from it or have it melt into comprehensible and familiar patterns of thought. These inquirers become captives of their own definitions. By choosing and picking in the doctrine only that which fits a particular definition of knowledge, one may unwittingly cut to shreds the very ties that hold those facts together; he replaces the thread furnished by H.P.B. with one of his own choosing, preferring his state of consciousness to that of the Teacher. This is no way to begin.

Theosophy as Alembic

Theosophy can be used in all directions, high or low, because that use comes from an understanding of the Spirit itself, from acting for that Self as that Self—for the Self acts only through the creatures. Acting for and as that Self in every direction, all else flows into line. All the destruction that is around us, all the misery that we see, has been brought about through our denial of the Holy Ghost—our denial of the Spirit within us. We deny it when we act as if we are our bodies, or our minds. That *will not be denied*. So man, meeting all the results of that denial and seeing them to be evil, learns that this is not the way. Then he seeks for Truth, and finding the truth, obtains all that he can desire—hope, happiness and a better understanding of his and all existence. It was to give to men all they could take in regard to the nature of the soul—that they might come out from this vale of sorrow—that those Beings known as Divine Incarnations have descended here of Their own will. They have carried forward from age to age this knowledge of nature and of man and of the purpose of life, learned through many civilizations of mankind.

—Rorert Crosbie

letters • questions • comment

I have been more than a little surprised on attending Theosophical study groups in several areas to encounter only one class in which sympathetic attention to some of the biblical scriptures was attempted. It is easy enough to realize why the Theosophist would emphasize the value of Eastern philosophies and religions, since we are already "surrounded," so to speak, by the atmosphere of Christianity, but is it not precisely the Theosophical presentation of biblical scriptures which is needed? This would seem to be indicated in many of H. P. Blavatsky's writings.

This point, we think, is well taken. It is true that the essential psychological meaning in such a document as Matthew's version of the Sermon on the Mount needs the cross-fertilization of other scriptural passages to come into clearest focus, but the essential meaning *is* there and should be thoroughly appreciated. Perhaps the Theosophist, in an inevitable reaction against the personalized, authoritarian-deity aspect of Christian theology, has sometimes failed to distinguish characteristic emphases on the weaknesses and sinful propensities of man and such a true affirmation of the Higher Self as that made in the Sermon on the Mount; and in that Sermon we do have a fully integrated philosophy, not simply a collection of "good sentiments."

Consider, for instance, the significance of such a paradox as that suggested by the verse, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" and the subsequent passages:

> Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
>
> Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
>
> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5:14-16.)

These sayings of the Teacher of Nazareth are clearly Buddhist in orientation. There are, in other words, two kinds of Karma: one

dealing with the Law of causation and effect as activated by the "lower nature" of man; the other, the Law as activated by the motivations of the higher nature. Those who are "meek" in respect to worldly things may also at the same time express the strength of spiritual affirmation. This is essentially the teaching of the first sermon of the Buddha, when he says:

> All that we are is the result of what we have thought: all that we are is founded on our thoughts and formed of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness pursues him like his own shadow that never leaves him.
>
> Whoso lives disciplining himself, unmindful of pleasures, his senses restrained, moderate in eating, full of faith and dauntless energy (*Virya*)—him verily Mara doth not overturn as a gale doth not overturn a rocky mountain.
>
> Conquest of self is indeed better than the conquest of others. Neither a deva (god) nor a gandharva (celestial musician), neither Brahma nor Mara could turn into defeat the victory of one who always practices self-control. (*The Dhammapada,* pp. 1, 2, 23.)

Note the parallels of spirit in these further passages, first from the Sermon on the Mount and later from verses of *The Dhammapada*:

> Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no regard of your Father which is in heaven.
>
> Therefore when thou dost thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
>
> But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:
>
> That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall regard thee openly. (Matt. 6: 1-4.)
>
> * * *
>
> Better than a man who offers, month after month for a hundred years, a thousand sacrifices is that man who pays homage to one grounded in wisdom. Superior is that homage to a century of formal sacrifices.
>
> A man is not a pillar of the Law because he talks much. He who even though he has heard little of the Law but himself has discernment, who always considers the Law, he is the Pillar of the Law, he is established in the Law. (*The Dhammapada,* pp. 24, 60.)

Other direct parallels suggest themselves, particularly in regard to the enunciation of the doctrine of *satyagraha* (integral nonviolence)

and noncondemnation of others. It is the teaching of Jesus that the faults of other men are irrelevant to the development of one's own understanding and compassion, and so we have Jesus' remonstrance to those who would have stoned the woman caught in adultery: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." And the parallel in the teachings of the Buddha comes with the reminder that we cannot judge from externals, since "from a mass of blinded mortals arises the disciple of the truly Wise One, shining with exceeding glory of his own Wisdom." With these few reminders, we can appreciate the Lord's Prayer in perhaps a different way, seeing in it, beyond a sort of "personalized" message, an enunciation of that spirit which puts trust in the Law and in Life:

> . . . Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
>
> After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
>
> Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
>
> Give us this day our daily bread.
>
> And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
>
> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matt. 6: 8-14.)

That the Gospels, despite the synthetic process of their manufacture, contain profound philosophy is made apparent by H. P. Blavatsky. She says in *Isis,* for example, that "the *original* Matthew was a secret book and is said to have contained many of the esoteric teachings of Jesus"; that the Gospel according to John "was written by an unknown Gnostic author. It gives an account of the parables of Jesus, but stresses his philosophy and is permeated with Greek thought." And in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 384) H.P.B. says: "The writers of the New Testament, whoever they were, must have been aware also of the priority of the Egyptian esotericism, since they have adopted several symbols that typify purely Egyptian conceptions and beliefs—in their outward and inward meaning—and which are not to be found in the Jewish Canon."

It has not been the ethos and mythos of Christianity which are opposed by the Theosophical student. It is simply that these myths need to be better understood. Work towards their revival in proper context should be undertaken by those who feel a natural attraction to the best in Christianity. But this is not, so to speak, the trend of

our times—a point made very clear by Joseph Campbell, who also discusses the "keys" to an understanding of all partially esoteric scriptures. Dr. Campbell writes:

> In modern progressive Christianity the Christ—Incarnation of the Logos and Redeemer of the World—is primarily a historical personage, a harmless country wise man of the semi-oriental past, who preached a benign doctrine of "do as you would be done by," yet was executed as a criminal. His death is read as a splendid lesson in integrity and fortitude.
>
> But wherever the poetry of myth is interpreted as biography, history, or science, it is killed. The living images become only remote facts of a distant time or sky. Furthermore, it is never difficult to demonstrate that as science and history mythology is absurd. When a civilization begins to reinterpret its mythology in this way, the life goes out of it, temples become museums, and the link between the two perspectives is dissolved. Such a blight has certainly descended on the Bible and on a great part of the Christian cult.
>
> To bring the images back to life, one has to seek, not interesting applications to modern affairs, but illuminating hints from the inspired past. When these are found, vast areas of half-dead iconography disclose again their permanently human meaning.

The Hiding of the Essence

In the theory of religion, as in that of other types of human experience and indeed also in theoretical issues of the natural sciences, questions of fact are inseparably bound up with questions of terminology; so that as soon as inquiry attempts to penetrate below the surface of a topic and to establish anything not already familiar, the need becomes imperative to be clear as to which things exactly one means to indicate by the names one employs.

It seems to the present writer, who regards the Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, and other such religious geniuses as spiritual benefactors of mankind, that what those great teachers themselves taught—as nearly as it can be ascertained—is vastly more illuminating and inspiring than what their all-too-common little followers have since done to, made of, added to, or omitted from, the original teachings.

—C. J. Ducasse

YOUTH FORUM

It seems that as soon as a person attempts to raise himself out of mediocrity and to lead a more sensitized kind of life, he finds himself constantly hindered, interrupted by a thousand trivial situations. He may, for example, be trying to read or write a poem,—or "feel" a symphony, or sense some of the mystery behind a simple object—when suddenly the phone will ring or a friend will come in and slam the door. At such moments, a person is likely to have a sinking feeling, a sense of desperate frustration. Yet surely there must be a better attitude one could take, a more positive reaction to the flood of dulling trivialities in which we live.

It is said that any concentrated effort in the direction of good stirs up an equally strong antagonistic force. This is quite understandable, on one level at least. It is inevitable that a prisoner will feel his chains most acutely when he is trying to escape from them. Yet any negative feeling—even towards the chains which bind us—must be wrong. It is the equal and opposite reaction to our positive aspiration; and therefore, however pure the sensitivity we are striving to achieve, it is completely voided if we feel annoyed or frustrated with the person who interrupts *our* "meditation." At such times of mental discomfort, it is also possible to futilely turn on ourselves, and to be suddenly filled with the devastating feeling that we are of no real help to anyone in the world, that all our fine thoughts and perceptions are mere vanity, since our relationships with our friends are full of friction. And yet that feeling also—so hard to avoid at times—is quite negative, unless it can in some way be used to goad us into a more positive, buoyant attitude towards ourselves and those around us.

"I know it was hard, my children," says the old blinded Oedipus, a few moments before his incredible sufferings are to come to an end in death, "and yet one word makes all those difficulties disappear: That word is love." If Oedipus is right, what are the implications? Can we love all these illusions and limitations which constantly threaten to overwhelm us?

Perhaps we can, if we understand—as Oedipus did—that there are two kinds of love. The first is the blind psychic involvement with matter (symbolized by Oedipus' relationship with his mother), while the second is the pure, all-including sunlit love born of spiritual perspective (symbolized by his love for his children). This is not a mere literary abstraction. Such subtle opposites, which words are often too blunt to express, compose the very stuff that life is made of. And the growing ability to discern such shades of difference makes us love life all the more—love, that is, in the sunlit sense of the word.

Usually, it seems, we lurch through life, like a car without brakes on a downhill grade, veering this way and that to avoid the pain of hitting obstacles. Yet if we could somehow achieve an internal quietness and steadiness—if we could, in Henry Miller's wonderful phrase, "stand still like a hummingbird"—we might not be thrown into despair when our pursuit of some subtle perception is interrupted by a sudden noise, or the imposition of some thought-cluttering obligation. It would seem, then, that we must keep an internal balance (much like a hummingbird's), so that we can change our course instantly to adjust to new conditions, no matter how fast we may be "flying."

A slamming door is beautiful. If we do not find it so, we are spending our time waiting to live. Ideally, then, we should have no preferences in life, but should be able to give ourselves fully to every subtle change in the current of existence, so that eventually we may be able to make the plunge into the ultimate mystery behind our living and dying, in much the same way that a fish gathers itself together and hurtles out of the water. Yet it is another of the subtle paradoxes of life that this heroic leap of the soul is in a real sense effortless. If we are consciously trying, we are at the same time excluding. If we grasp at some perception, and try to hold it in our hands, it will die, become an "ism," and we will miss the *flow* of life.

It would seem, therefore, that if a friend barges in while we are deep in thought, we should let go of our precious perceptions, and without a moment's regret, turn to our friend and meet him as fully as we possibly can, at the same time recognizing the change of tone, of level, and *savoring* the subtle quality or atmosphere of that transition. Along with seeking realizations about life, we must also learn simply to let life happen. It will.

As Rilke so powerfully puts it:

Don't think I am wooing,
Angel, and, if I were, you wouldn't come.
For my appeal is always full of refusal.
You cannot stride against so strong a flood.
Like an outstretched arm is my call. And its grasping
Upward open hand stays before you,
Open, as safeguard and warning,
You unseizable one, wide open.

NO "PROUD SECLUSION"

It is true, we must aspire ardently, and blessed is the one who, after the first aspiration, is wise enough to see the Truth.

Three qualities forever encompass us: *Satwa* (truth and stability), *Rajas* (action, war, aspiration, ambition), *Tamas* (indifference, ignorance, darkness).

None may be ignored. So the path lies from Tamas, up through war, ambition, and aspiration, to Satwa, or truth and stability. We are now in Rajasika regions, sometimes lifting our fingers up to the hem of the garment of Satwa, ever aspiring, ever trying to purify our thoughts and free ourselves from the attachment to actions and objects. So, of course, the ardent student naturally aspires for power. This is wise. But he must soon begin to see what he must do for real progress. For continual aspiration for power, merely, is sure to sow for us the giant weed of self.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

WHAT IS MAGNETISM?

ALL things, says the Kabala, are derived from the one great Principle, and this principle is the unknown and invisible God. Pythagoras taught his disciples that God is the universal *mind* diffused through all things, and that this mind by the sole virtue of its universal sameness could be communicated from one object to another, and be made to create all things by the sole will-power of man. What is this God but Æther as it was *known* to the ancient philosophers, with all its mysterious and occult properties, containing in itself the germs of universal creation?

Plato and the Pythagoreans named it the Soul of the World. Æther, in esotericism, is the very quintessence of all possible energy, and it is certainly to this universal agent (composed of many agents) that all the manifestations of energy in the material, psychic and spiritual worlds are due. The ancients called it Chaos; according to the Hindus, the Deity in the shape of *Akasha* pervades all things. Among other names this universal Proteus was termed by the theurgists "the living fire," the "Spirit of Light," and *Magnes*. This last appellation indicates its magnetic properties and shows its magical nature. Magnes, a word used by Paracelsus and medieval Theosophists, meant the spirit of light, or Akasha. Who knows where ends the power of the protean giant—Æther, or whence its mysterious origin; who, we mean, that denies the spirit that works in it and evolves out of it all visible forms?

As "God" creates, so can man create. Long ago the Magi were described by Porphyry as "the learned men who engaged among the Persians in the service of the Deity"—Akasha-Æther, the *Pater Omnipotens*. Among the Rosicrucians, *Magus* was the title of the highest members. Ancient and hereditary priests derived their name from *Maha,* great, in whose honor the lodestone was called magnet, for the Magi were the first to discover its wonderful properties. Temples of healing dotted the country in all directions, and among these were some temples of Hercules—hence the stone, when it once became known that the priests used it for their curative and *magical*

NOTE.—Collated from theosophical writings.

purposes, received the name of the Magnesian or the Herculean stone.

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature only for ignorant people. "Magician" was once the synonym of all that was honorable and reverent, of a possessor of learning and wisdom, a title of renown and distinction. White Magic was beneficent, devoid of selfishness, love of power, ambition or lucre; bent only on doing good to the world in general, and one's neighbor in particular. But one asks, what constitutes magic? What is a magician? Paracelsus teaches that determined *will* is the beginning of all magical operations, and that it is because men "do not perfectly *imagine and believe the result,* that the (occult) arts are so uncertain, while they may be perfectly certain."

Is it enough for man to know that he exists, to be formed a human being, to enable him to deserve the appellation of MAN? To become a genuine spiritual entity, which that designation implies, man must first *create* himself anew, so to speak; i.e., thoroughly eliminate from his mind and spirit, not only the dominating influence of selfishness and other impurity, but also the infection of superstition and prejudice. The latter is far different from what we commonly term antipathy or sympathy. We are at first irresistibly or unwittingly drawn within its dark circle by that peculiar influence, that powerful current of magnetism which emanates from ideas as well as from physical bodies. By this we are surrounded, and finally prevented through moral cowardice—fear of public opinion—from stepping out of it. It is rare that men regard a thing in either its true or false light, accepting the conclusion by the free action of their own judgment. The conclusion is more commonly reached by blindly adopting the opinion current at the hour among those with whom they associate.

"Know thyself." Man, the most perfect of organized beings on earth, in whom matter and spirit, i.e., *will,* are the most developed and powerful, is alone allowed to give a *conscious* impulse to that principle which emanates from him. Only he can impart to the magnetic fluid opposite and various impulses without limit as to their direction. Man can create. The fire stolen by Prometheus has fallen down in the struggle to earth; it embraces the lower regions of the sky, and settles in the waves of the universal ether—or astral light—as potential Akasha. We breathe and imbibe it into our organic system with every mouthful of fresh air. Our organism is

full of it from the instant of our birth. But it becomes potential only under the influx of WILL and SPIRIT.

As the Intelligent Idea (God), which, by directing its sole will-power toward a centre of localized forces, called objective forms into being, so can man, the microcosm of the great Macrocosm, do the same in proportion with the development of his will-power. The will creates; for the will in motion is *force,* and force produces matter. The miracle-workers of all periods, schools, and countries, produced their wonders because they were perfectly familiar with the imponderable—in their effects—but otherwise perfectly tangible waves of the astral light. They controlled the currents by guiding them with their will-power. The wonders were both of physical and psychological character; the former embracing effects produced upon material objects; the latter, the mental phenomena of Mesmer and his successors. Mesmerism is the most important branch of magic, and its phenomena are the effects of the universal agent which underlies all magic and has produced at all ages the so-called miracles.

Says Wm. Q. Judge: "The human Will is all powerful, the Imagination a most useful faculty with a dynamic force. The Imagination is the picture-making power of the human mind. When trained it is the Constructor in the human workshop. Will cannot do its work if the Imagination be at all weak or untrained." Imagination is the power to make in the ether an image; it is the sight and the hand of the mind and the will, without this the latter can accomplish nothing. But given a certain intensity of the will, and the shapes created by the mind become subjective. Given a more intense and intelligent concentration of this will, and the form becomes concrete, visible, objective; the man has learned the secret of secrets; he is a Magician. The life-principle is but a blind force obeying a controlling influence. The subjective model outlined in the imagination forces this blind force to obey and follow the original in its least detail, as the hand and brush of the painter follow the image which they copy from his mind. The will forms an invisible but yet, to it, perfectly objective matrix, in which matter is caused to deposit itself and assume a fixed shape.

How is it to be explained? The will acts with immense force, exerting the powers both of attraction and repulsion as desired; these mysterious effects of attraction and repulsion are the *unconscious agents* of that will. Inorganic matter exercises unconsciously, *will;* magnetic objects will attract, repel. The germ point of every atom,

its *preexistent matter,* is the first manifestation and emanation of the Deity itself. The inexplicable power of attraction is but an anatomical portion of that essence that scientists and kabalists alike equally recognize as the "principle of life"—the Akasha. Of course, a clear realization of that which is meant by *will* in Occult Science, is necessary. In the physical world and its material planes, it is called MOTION; in the worlds of mentality and metaphysics it is known as WILL—the many-faced magician throughout all nature.

Magnetism, then, is a FORCE in nature and in man, obedient and creative when guided by the will. It is taught that prayer opens the spiritual sight of man, for "prayer is desire, and desire develops WILL; the magnetic emanations proceeding from the body at every effort—whether physical or mental—produce self-magnetization and ecstacy—illumination." The *Magus* is the spiritually illumined, one who "has deserved the appellation of MAN." True *life* means the certitude of personal immortality in Spirit, not in Soul, which, as a finite emanation, must certainly disintegrate its particles—a compound of human sensations, passions, and yearnings for some *objective* kind of existence—before the immortal spirit of the *Ego* is quite freed. And how can man ever reach this state so long as the *Upadana,* that state of longing for life, more life, does not disappear from the sentient body, from the *Ahankara* clothed, however, in a sublimated body? It is the "Upadana" or the intense desire which produces Will, and it is *will* which develops *force,* and the latter generates *matter,* or an object having form.

Thus the disembodied Ego, through this sole undying desire in him, unconsciously furnishes the conditions of his successive self-procreations in various forms, which depend on his mental state and the Karma, the good and bad deeds of his preceding existence, commonly called "merit and demerit."

This is why Buddha recommended to his mendicants the cultivation of the four degrees of Dhyana, the noble "Path of the Four Truths," that gradual acquirement of stoical indifference to either life or death; that state of spiritual self-contemplation during which man utterly loses sight of his physical and dual individuality, composed of body and soul; and uniting himself with his third and higher immortal self the real and heavenly man merges, so to say, into the divine Essence, whence his own spirit proceeded like a spark from the common hearth.

on the lookout

Manas in Religion

There are several ways of reading H. P. Blavatsky's closing paragraphs in her article "Theosophy or Jesuitism?" and other comments on the future of Christianity. One of them would suggest that literalism in religion is rapidly dying out, that authoritarianism is also on the wane, and that even the hitherto most rigid examples of "High Church" are bending before numerous cross-drafts of liberal opinion. Discussions of religion in contemporary periodical literature certainly tend to favor such an interpretation of Madame Blavatsky's "predictions." Take for example a story in *Time* for May 3. Under the heading "The Catholic Scholars," *Time* reports "tempestuous internal fights" in the Roman church, on the subject of whether the Bible or Catholic "tradition" should be given pre-eminent authority:

> Last week, at the request of Pope John, the Pontifical Biblical Commission met in secret session at the Vatican Palace and agreed to resolve the quarrel by formulating new principles to guide Catholics in the scholarly study of Scripture.

A "Fifth Column" Against Infallibility

> The battle, now nearly a decade old, is between the progressive majority of Catholic Biblical scholars and a cadre of conservative views of the Holy Office. Both sides agree that the Bible cannot err. The theologians, concerned primarily with preserving doctrine from heresy, believe that the Bible should be analyzed with reverent caution, using at most the tools of grammar and philology to yield the meaning of words. Scholars believe that more is needed: the Bible, they say, is not history in the modern sense, but a collection of books whose meaning can only be unearthed after comparing it with other literatures, using archaeological discoveries to test facts, and attempting to discover the purpose of its writers.
>
> Both approaches have their dangers. Theologians tend to emphasize the divine inspiration and the factual truth of Scripture, and can fall into literalist absurdity—believing, for example, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, even though Deuteronomy tells of his death. Scholars can be tempted to forget that the Bible is God's Word, and treat it as a puzzling mound of poetry.

More Protestant "Boldness"

A trend which is liberal for Catholics becomes downright revolutionary in Protestantism. An example is the controversial volume of an English bishop, The Rt. Rev. John A. Robinson, who burst upon the Anglican canonical horizon with an English paperback titled *Honest to God*. As *Time* (April 20) sums it up, Bishop Robinson opens to rational discussion areas usually reserved for faith:

> God is in heaven, exact location not defined. His son came to earth in human flesh, preached and worked miracles, by his death redeemed man, and rose again to heaven, where he "sitteth on the right hand of God." So say the Bible and the Christian creeds. But the story makes no sense to many literal, science-minded men [and] the Anglican bishop explains that the doctrine is mostly dubious.

Popular Heresy

Time notes that *Honest to God,* actually calling for a drastic revision of Anglican teaching, "has become a runaway English best-seller and has stirred up the Church of England's loudest row in years." Further comment by *Time*:

> *Honest to God* is a blend of ideas borrowed from some of the century's most provocative Protestant theologians. Like German Biblical Critic Rudolf Bultmann, Robinson regards the virgin birth and the heaven-above-hell-below framework of Scripture as religious myths; he argues that the essential Gospel message must be "demythologized" by liberating it from antiquated supernatural language. Rejecting the Biblical image of a transcendent God in the sky, Robinson suggests that Christians think of God the way Existentialist Theologian Paul Tillich does: as the "ground of all being."
>
> Fortified by such insights, Robinson believes, the church may grow into what the late German Lutheran Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "religious Christianity."

The Current Issue

The *Time* review concludes:

> None of this thinking is particularly new to the theological academies, but many Anglicans were shocked that it should come from a bishop sworn to defend the church against heresy. "It is not every day," grumbled the Church Times, "that a bishop goes on public record as apparently denying almost every Christian doctrine of the church in which he holds office." The Manchester Guardian called it a "dangerous tract," suitable only for theologians to read, and in a front-page editorial, London's Daily

Mail wondered "whether he should continue as a bishop."

But *Honest to God* was approved by the evangelical Church of England Newspaper, which argued that "a reading of Robinson's book should be accompanied by a recollection of the conspicuous failure of the Church of England as a whole to make Christianity meaningful to this generation." The Rev. Peter Hollis of Birmingham gave Robinson some rank-and-file support: "I have often wondered how long we could continue to present the Gospel in traditional categories with any real effect."

Towards a New Biblical Conception

We now turn to the most liberal of Christian opinion, as represented in the Unitarian Universalist *Register-Leader* by Kingsbury M. Badger. This writer contends that the Bible will best serve the needs of our time if we follow Emerson's advice: "Make your own Bible. Select and collect all the words and sentences that in all your reading have been to you like the blast of triumph out of Shakespeare, Seneca, Moses, John and Paul." Prof. Badger continues:

I have been referring to the old Bible as the *so-called* Judeo-Christian Bible because it is incomplete, but more especially because it contains many veins of thought from sources other than Judaism and Christianity. This book is, in reality, a Judeo-Egypto-Persio-Greco-etcetero Bible, and a very inadequate anthology at that. To make it satisfactory as an instrument of liberal religion, we should have to make it representative of all of the best literature by all peoples during the entire history of mankind.

The myths of creation and other prehistoric events in the Old Testament are hardly so superior, to the beautiful Greek myths and countless other myths of the world as to be found in one book with gilt edges and called *the* Word of man, let alone of God.

Make Your Own Bible

"Make your own Bible." To many men, including liberals, this means confusion, if not chaos. What is our authority, then? Are we to have such an enormous Bible that we really have none? In answer we must state immediately that after uncanonizing and universalizing our Bible, we certainly do not desire to recanonize. Canons do not belong in liberal religion any more than creeds do. But there is help for the person who would feel lost without his old Bible.

We must, of course, find the world Bible, that is, the literature of the world quite unwieldy. No vest-pocket editions could be produced, and no airplane passenger could get his complete world Bible aboard with him. At swearing-in time in the courtroom a bookcase could be used, so that a man would in fact "swear on a *stack* of Bibles"; but how on earth could one take his Bible to

prayer meeting or on vacation, and how could he read it and memorize it from cover to cover? Just the *Wisdom of the East* (Max Müller's edition of eastern scriptures) would be bulky enough, to say nothing of the Great Books collection, with or without the Syntopicon, or the *Columbia Universe Course in Literature* (eighteen volumes).

What for the Future?

Prof. Badger concludes:

Here are my best practical suggestions:

1. Teach world literature in theological seminaries and see to it that theological students prepare for such study by first equipping themselves with good liberal arts backgrounds, particularly in literature.
2. Teach world literature in Bible courses at religious education institutes.
3. Either replace the old Bible, or supplement it with other great books, in our churches and church schools.
4. Publish an anthology of the *Bible of Mankind* (all great literature), together with a *Guide to the Reading of the Bible of Mankind*. The latter would lead from the anthology into the larger Bible.
5. Place this anthology and guide in the churches that want them and back them up with bookcases handy to the man in the pulpit.
6. Start the whole universalizing movement in the Commission on Religion and the Arts or in another committee formed for that purpose.

See what the universalizing of the *Bible* would mean. The letters of Paul and John would stand on our shelves beside those of Pliny and Cicero, Franklin and Jefferson, Byron and Keats. The wisdom literature of the old Bible would stand side by side with the *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus,* Lao-tzu, Confucius, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Plato, Emerson, Gandhi, Schweitzer, Gibran, Tagore. *Prometheus Bound* and *Prometheus Unbound,* Homer's and Joyce's stories of Ulysses, the best versions of the Job, Jesus, Faust legends would sit together, cheek-by-jowl. We would then have a Bible for liberals, a Bible uncanonized and universalized, a magnificent symbol of Unitarian Universalism.

"Gift of Tongues" Attracts Attention

A two-part discussion of "glossolalia" in the Los Angeles *Times* (March 10 and 17) indicates an increased general interest in a manifestation which formerly attracted attention only in religious circles—the "gift of tongues." It was dissension over this phenomenon, as being a "badge of the Holy Spirit," that caused the "Pente-

costals" to split from the established, or "main-line," churches and form a separate sect a half-century ago. The *Times* religious editor, Dan Thrapp, quotes a Pentecostal minister as deploring this schism:

> By rights there should never have been a separate group from Protestantism known as the Pentecostals. In 1906-1910, when the Azusa St. activities produced a recurrence of the glossolalia, most of the participants were from historic churches. The leaders that were non-participants opposed the experience. Thus those with the experience were ostracized and removed from their churches due to the rejection of the glossolalia at that time. . . . Hostility forced the separation.

At present, however, as the *Times* article points out, "many churchmen of established denominations are taking a second, and more serious look at the gift of tongues when manifest in their communions. Apparently the manifestation is widespread, of considerable duration, and interest in it is pronounced." (Our own "research" into this matter is in response to reader-request.)

From Antagonism to Consideration

In the second part of his discussion (March 17), Mr. Thrapp asserts that the gift of tongues is "quietly spreading through the churches of the nation," and his column consists largely of communications substantiating this statement. Not all comments are favorable on this surprising development, of course, and most of them suggest "caution" or offer "a word of warning." It seems an incontrovertible fact, however, that the gift of tongues has broken out in Christian denominations hitherto practically impervious to such psychic manifestations. Mr. Thrapp concludes:

> The Living Church, the Episcopal magazine of the church's life and thought, reported at length on an appearance of glossolalia at Yale recently, a manifestation which still is going on.
>
> "We cannot believe that God means nothing by this resurgence in our time of pentecostal experiences," it said. "The experiences at Yale are a part of the whole picture. One may psychologize or rationalize them . . . but psychologizing and rationalizing—and even theologizing—are merely human means of reflecting upon what God is doing in history."

Less Tolerant Episcopalian Comment

The Rt. Rev. James A. Pike, bishop of the Episcopal diocese of California branded glossolalia as "heresy in embryo" in a pastoral letter read in all churches of the diocese, according to the Los Angeles *Times* for May 7. The item reports:

> The bishop, in banning Episcopal clergymen from encouraging or practicing glossolalia, said he viewed it as "dangerous to the peace of the church and a threat to sound doctrine." . . .
>
> The bishop took notice of the fact that "speaking in tongues" is mentioned in the New Testament and of its popularity with Pentecostal sects. He said, however, because of its spread throughout the diocese and major Protestant faiths throughout the country, he felt "compelled" to act after "considerable wrestling of the spirit."
>
> He pointed out glossolalia was "a psychological phenomenon known over many centuries, quite apart from any particular religious orientation; in more extreme forms it is associated with schizophrenia."

Evangelical Opinions

Three pamphlets on glossolalia, written by Christian evangelists who base their arguments on Bible passages, agree that emphasis on the supreme importance of the "gift of tongues" does not have scriptural sanction. All call attention to the fact that the "speaking in *other tongues*" (mentioned by Paul) is not at all the same thing as the ecstatic utterances usually meant by the "gift of tongues." This point is brought out clearly by Don W. Hillis in *What Can Tongues Do For You?*:

> It is noteworthy that the Pentecostal experience as described in Acts chapter two does not give us an illustration of speaking in "unknown tongues," i.e., ecstatic utterances. We are told that the 120 . . . in the upper room were "all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with *other* tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). These *other* tongues were not *unknown* tongues. The Scripture is its own commentary as to what they were. In Acts 2:8 we read, "And how hear we every man in *our own tongue,* wherein we were born?" In 2:11 we read, "We do hear them speak *in our tongues* the wonderful works of God."
>
> These other tongues were contemporary languages. It is, therefore, a misappropriation of Scripture to use the second chapter of Acts as a basis for speaking in "unknown tongues" in the sense of those tongues being ecstatic utterances not understood by men.

Different Levels of Inspiration

The foregoing suggests a point which should be clarified—there are two types of "speaking in other tongues": the one, where the speaker uses a language foreign to *him;* the other, where the speaker uses his own language, but the hearers *"hear"* it in their own. Both types seem to be instances of what H. P. Blavatsky describes as "spiritual gifts." The vagueness of the phrase "gift of tongues" is

clearly brought out in the following excerpt from John Rice's *Speaking with Tongues*:

> We are compelled by honesty to say that speaking in tongues as it is usually practiced today does not follow the pattern of the example at Pentecost. . . . Since only God can see the heart, I do not attempt to judge how many people fool others by pretending to speak in tongues, how many are brought into a trance and half-hypnotized into speaking as they hear others speak, or as they are taught to expect to speak, some words or syllables that have no particular meaning. I have no way to know how many simply follow the pattern of others before them, without intentional deceit, and talk as they hear others talk. I have no way to know how many are demon-possessed. Certainly I do not pretend to know to how many God gives certain ecstasies for their own joy, in answer to prayer, though not after the Bible fashion and not a miraculous gift. And I do not know how many really do have the Bible gift of talking in other languages to the unsaved. It is sufficient for me to know that honest and good people who want to do right have often been deceived on this matter. I know that speaking in tongues is not a Bible evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Scholarly Consideration of Glossolalia

The first adequate treatise in English on this subject appeared in 1927—*Speaking in Tongues,* by George B. Cutten, then president of Colgate University. Dr. Cutten approaches the study from both a historical and psychological standpoint. In his chapter, "Psychological Explanation," he notes that though most of the examples of "speaking in tongues" are mere childish gibberish, there had been instances where a person had manufactured a structured "language" which was unknown to anyone else—for example the "Martian" language of Mlle. Hélène Smith, in the 1890's. A paragraph from this chapter may be helpful in assessing this phenomenon:

> Some think the symptoms resemble a partially developed catalepsy, or, at least, one form of catalepsy. Others, again, call it hysteria. There are certain phases of the phenomena which resemble each of these states, and other phases which are common to all. . . .
>
> One must recognize that in naming the state he does not thereby explain it. We may classify speaking with tongues as hysteria, catalepsy, or ecstasy: this but aids us in description, we must still account for it. . . . In terms more directly borrowed from the vocabulary of modern psychology, in considering speaking with tongues we have to do with a state of personal disintegration, in which the verbo-motive centers of the subject are obedient to sub-

> conscious impulses. . . . In conditions of instability, the subconscious has a tendency to bring to the surface normally regressive and concealed characteristics, in which emotional elements predominate.

Phenomena: Psychic or Spiritual?

Isis Unveiled, the Theosophical compendium of information on and explanation of psychic manifestations, contains many scattered references to ecstatic utterances in connection with hysteria, catalepsy, obsession, etc. The following passage, however, shows the necessity of distinguishing each instance of the physical manifestation of inner forces, taking into account the *character* of the individual displaying it:

> Physical phenomena are the result of the manipulation of forces through the physical system of the medium, by the unseen intelligences, of whatever class. In a word, physical mediumship depends on a peculiar organization of the *physical* system; spiritual mediumship . . . depends upon a like peculiar organization of the *spiritual* nature of the medium. . . . As a rule, mediums who have been developed for one class of phenomena rarely change to another, but repeat the same performance *ad infinitum*. . . . The latter depend on the moral state of the medium. (*Isis Unveiled* I, 367.)

From the foregoing we can see that "speaking in tongues" is a *form* of "mediumship," a non-egoic state of consciousness. If, as H.P.B. says (*Isis* II, 19), "America is the conservatory of sensitives," it may well be that the increasing evidence of glossolalia is an instance of the "rising tide of psychism" to be expected in the last quarter of the century.

Death Penalty Deterrents?

The Supreme Court of the State of California has just contributed substantially to public education on the many misunderstood issues involved in the debate on capital punishment, according to the Los Angeles *Times* for May 8:

> The State Supreme Court Tuesday [May 7] threw out the death penalty imposed on two Los Angeles County killers because the prosecutor told the jury the death penalty is a deterrent to crime.
>
> Justice Mathew Tobriner in the majority opinion said the prosecutor showed prejudicial error in arguing that the death penalty was a more effective deterrent to crime than imprisonment. Tobriner said the prosecutor "was not temperate and restrained."

The court has held similarly in previous cases. It has noted that there is no legislative finding that death is a more effective crime deterrent. Tobriner added, "nor is it a matter of common knowledge."

A Novelist's Insight

One of the most deservedly popular paperback novels of 1963, *The Trial of Callista Blake,* by Edgar Pangborn, contains some excellent passages on this point. In the concluding chapter, Mr. Pangborn also describes the outlook of a judge who had been compelled to pronounce the death sentence on an innocent woman after a jury trial. The justice writes in this vein to his brother, after resigning from his high position and explaining why to his profession:

> In that letter I marshalled all the familiar arguments against capital punishment, for the sake of logic and completeness. Paulus has heard them all, and so have most citizens above the moron level. Capital punishment does not deter, nor have any effect on the crime rate one way or another—repeatedly demonstrated by statistical study long before the time of Warden Lawes; vengeance does not restore life, but only adds another evil, namely murder by the state; there can never be complete assurance that the innocent will not be punished and the guilty go free; punishment itself serves no purpose except to excite the self-deceptive emotions of the punisher; and so on. While I listed and discussed these and lesser arguments in my letter, I grew increasingly discouraged, mostly by realization that it has all been said before, more persuasively than I know how to say it, that the arguments on the other side seem (at least to my best understanding) monstrously shabby, unrealistic, archaic, some of them plain sadism with its nakedness barely hidden by doubletalk, and yet the laws remain on the books.
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> You're a headshrinker, Jack—why do so many minds cling to unreason with such a sullen fury? I am thinking of people like Judge Cleever, or people who can read the entire transcript of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial and still declare briskly and earnestly that the innocent are never punished. How do they do it? What's the faculty of the mind that makes it possible for an intelligent being to look directly on a glaring fact and somehow will it out of sight? For my part I *cannot,* from sheer physical inability, believe a lie when the demonstration is before me.

Business Booming for Blood Donors

"Science has come to Skid Row. . . . and if a man has blood containing certain desirable factors, he now can make as much as $50 a week merely by lying on a bed twice a week for 1½ hours," says the Los Angeles *Times* for Jan. 27. The promises held out are two:

"It is bringing with it prosperity for many a down-and-outer and, more importantly, salvation for hundreds of hemophiliacs and others in need of blood all over America." The development of this new industry is described:

> For many years the traditional Skid Row method of getting a fast grubstake has been to donate a pint of blood to a commercial laboratory for $5.
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> This way of augmenting income was fast, simple and effortless. But the medical restriction that an individual could not donate oftener than every eight weeks hardly made it highly profitable.

"Boon to Donors"

> Then came plasmapheresis. This is the name for a new procedure which makes it possible for a person to give blood two or more times a week instead of once every eight weeks. As a consequence, the plasma production has jumped 16-fold and so has the income.

Dr. Madeline Fallon, medical director of the organization that provides hemorrhage-stopping plasma for hundreds of hemophiliac "bleeders" in this area, rejoices in the "salvation" made possible by the new method, because the same donors may be used repeatedly.

What Is Blood?

"Blood is Life," teaches the Old Testament; and Theosophical writings imply that blood is more than "the fluid substance with its various solid constituents which circulate in the arteries and veins of the animal body." If the root of the physical body is the electromagnetic astral pattern on which the physical shapes itself, this subtle substance may be affected in many mysterious non-chemical ways. Since there is no sharp cleavage between the sheaths of the soul, no walling off of one from the other, there must be a natural "transfusion" between the principles. And if blood is the carrier, not only of the life-energy but of psychic influences transmitted to it from the Kamic principle, the patient may well become the unconscious recipient of qualities and dispositions of the donor. This danger is augmented by the ever-present risk of transmitting causative agents of bodily disease.